Editorial

On the First Issue of "Issues and Trends in Educational Technology"

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Abstract

A brief introduction to our view of the history and role of educational technology and its practitioners, and a statement of our standards and vision for this journal.

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Educational technology is an applied field whose practitioners facilitate learning through the design, evaluation, and use of appropriate technological tools and processes. The field is extensive enough to encompass both theoretical and pragmatic philosophies, and those of us who self-style as "educational technologists" may find our niche nearly anywhere along the spectrum between the academic and the professional worlds. Educational technology dates back, in fairly recognizable form, at least to 1920s, when Sidney Pressey (1927) invented a teaching machine predating by several decades those later popularized by B.F. Skinner. Taking a broader view of technology, one which encompasses more than simply code, circuitry and machinery, educational technologists have long been fond of tracing our origins to the classical use of dialectic as a tool to interrogate the essential truths of the world (Skinner, 1968).

Even these deliberately abbreviated histories suggest one of the most central and unusual features of our discipline: Educational technology is both timeless and constantly evolving. As computing and communications technologies have become ubiquitous in the world at large, they have also pervaded the ways that we create and disseminate knowledge. It is difficult to think of a modern educational experience that does not somehow rely on technology—it is nearly impossible to think of one that could not benefit from the addition or improved use of technology.

Ironically, it is the very pace and scale of this innovation that makes it difficult to assimilate isolated gains into a cohesive philosophy. As an academic field, educational technology remains highly decentralized and idiosyncratic. Research is scattered, terminology is unstandardized, and the impact of even highly consequential findings is often surprisingly isolated. If practitioners of educational technology are to establish meaningful communities

of practice, we must do a better job of organizing and highlighting the growing body of research, philosophy and best practices produced by scholars and graduate students.

Peer-reviewed journals are a major venue for addressing these issues. In educational technology, there are a number of high quality peer-reviewed journals that publish research and best practices. Indeed, one could be forgiven for wondering how the establishment of a new publication is likely to contribute to the theoretical cohesion of the field. Our purposes with *Issues and Trends in Educational Technology* (ITET) are fourfold:

- To publish high-quality content including original research, book and product reviews, personal narratives and opinions.
- To reach a large and diverse audience of academics and professionals using the free "open-access" online journal model.
- To let authors present their work alongside the digital media it describes—a method better suited to illustrating findings than traditional print figures.
- To focus on the latest topics and trends in educational technology by publishing papers as they are accepted.

Our Standards

ITET publishes original research including conceptual and implementation studies after a careful peer review process. We also publish evaluations of newly available or hitherto unevaluated resources in a review section focusing on books, articles, software, services, online courses and other relevant material. All work is published under the minimally restrictive Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 copyright license.

Our Vision

ITET's vision is to provide a trustworthy and freely accessible platform to discuss and disseminate knowledge. After a careful review of print and open access publications in our field, we see that there are four main research topics favored by educational technology scholars. These areas are summarized in Figure 1.

In addition to serving as a formal peer-reviewed journal, we seek to encourage informal interaction amongst educational technology professionals by providing an online forum for discussion of the articles, ideas and resources mentioned above. A further distinguishing feature of ITET is our commitment to highlighting new voices and ideas in educational technology by publishing research, opinion and other work by graduate students. Graduate student submissions will be vetted for quality but not subject to the standard peer-review process, and will be published under a subsection of the journal.

Roblyer (2005) suggests that there are four types of research that moves a field forward: studies that establish relative advantage; studies to improve implementation strategies; studies that monitor impact on important societal goals; and studies to report on common uses and shape desired directions. Research into the topics identified above can serve any and all of these purposes. Learning environments and tools have been

Foundations (Theories/Concepts)	Learning Environments	Tools/Systems/ Communication	Outcomes/Policy/ Change
Instructional Design	Mobile Learning Design	Semantic Web	Assessment
Cognition & Learning	E-Learning Design	Cloud Computing	Relative Advantage of Educational Technology
Learning Analytics	Collaborative Learning Environments	Video Games and Simulations	Societal Impact of Educational Technology
Human-Computer Interaction	Personal Learning Environments	Social Networking	Educational Change Through Technology
Connectivism	Virtual Schooling	Augmented Reality	
Self-Directed Learning		Virtual Reality	
TPACK		Open Source Movement	
		Assistive Technologies	

Figure 1: Issues and Trends in Educational Technology Research

the subject of primary interest to educational technology researchers over the past two decades. Veletsianos (2010) and Rushby (2011) report that they received more proposals and articles on virtual worlds, educational gaming and mobile learning than any other topic. It is our hope that ITET will become a platform where all types of research that will advance our field are represented equally.

We look forward to starting a tradition of high quality research and scholarship on the issues and trends of educational technology that reports empirical and scholarly studies on the impact and relative advantage of educational technology.

Special Thanks

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